

We Will Because We Can

Carol Lundin's Activity-Based Therapy

by Ellee Thalheimer

This coming June 2nd and 3rd, the Cancer Community Renewal Project is sponsoring the We Will Because We Can Bike Ride which represents the culmination of difficult and inspirational events for Carol Lundin.

When I visited Carol at her home, I saw a picture of Carol in the bright Montana sun. Her muscles shiny with sweat and cut from touring by bike across the country. Her smile is not a toothy picture smile, but a subtle expression of determination and satisfaction. She rode her bike across the country after her sister died from breast cancer at 44. Funds raised from her cycling tour were put towards starting the Cancer Community Renewal Project in 2000, a non-profit in Portland that provides activity and wellness-based programming for breast cancer survivors.

Ironically, Carol's co-founder was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2002, and Carol was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2004. Her relationship with breast cancer has been a long road of healing, set-backs, and perseverance. Nonetheless, she continued to work for the Cancer Community Renewal Project throughout her treatment. Now, in remission, she has doubled her efforts to advocate for breast cancer survivors and their families.

"Cycling allows you to accomplish challenging feats with your body, a body that in some ways has let you down. That empowers you and is incredibly healing. After my personal battle with breast cancer, this became crystal clear," says Carol.

Along with the healing potential of cycling and activity-based therapy, Carol emphasizes the power of community. For the ride, she's drawing together a diversity of folks to come out to cycle and support the cause—such as breast cancer survivors in their sixties and Les Femmes, an African American girls group.

With the money raised from the We Will Because We Can Bike Ride, Carol will implement cycling and walking programs as well as make yoga classes and massage services available to breast cancer survivors. Not only do these services empower survivors and improve quality of life, but it is a very effective way to prevent reoccurrence.

Carol encourages survivors, their supporters, and cyclists of any nature to come out and ride. Cause or not, it should be a fabulous ride. The Vernonia-based loops bring riders through the gorgeous forests of rural Columbia County. There are a variety of route options for beginners as well as the seasoned cyclist looking to climb a pass or two. Plus, cold beer and music await you at the end of Saturday's ride.

Good luck, Carol, and ride on with your bad self.

